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THE
CONSTITUTION

AND

By-Laws,

OF THE

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Hibernian Relief Society,

27-3
INSTITUTED MARCH 9, 1827.

TO WHICH IS ADDED, SUNDRY RÉSOLUTIONS, PASSED
ON THE 16TH, OF APRIL AND AN ADDRESS,
ADOPTED ON THAT OCCASION, AND ALSO
THE NAMES OF THE OFFICERS.

BOSTON:

JOHN G. SCOBIE, PRINTER, CORNER OF DOCK-SQUARE.

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1827.

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FRIENDS OF IRELAND.

At a meeting of the friends of Ireland held at the Pantheon Hall, in Boston on the 11th day of April, the following resolutions were passed :

WHEREAS, We are under a government tolerant in its form and consistent in its operation, giving to each individual equal protection, without reference to his religious creed.—

And, whereas it is a constitutional right for any portion of the citizens of the United States, to assemble and express their opinions upon the evils, not only of their own, but of any other country.

And whereas seven millions of the population of Ireland are oppressed in a grievous manner for adhering to their religious opinions, which interferes with the dictates of conscience, the unalienable rights of man—

And, whereas the sufferings of Ireland appear to result principally from the effect of a cruel and unjust course, adopted by the government of England, rather than from any lack of the means of existence in her own beautiful country.

Therefore *Resolved*, That in our opinion, the penal, commercial, civil, and military laws which are enforced upon the Catholics of Ireland, are intrinsically and relatively oppressive and unjust, and ruinous in their effects.

Resolved, That we sincerely and unfeignedly sympathise with our brethren in Ireland, in their privations and sufferings, and recommend to them perseverance in a constitutional course of obtaining relief.

Resolved, That sincere thanks are due to the distinguished Protestants of Ireland, who have in christian charity, extended the hand of relief, and who have, as far as was in their power, endeavored to op-

pose the exercise of that sanguinary force which has been used to trample down life, and civil and religious freedom.

Resolved, That we deem it proper that an Association be formed whose object shall be—

1st, To relieve the destitute in Ireland.

2d. To collect subscriptions in aid of the Catholic rent in Ireland, and to co-operate with a similar institution now in Ireland.

3d. To send forth an address from this body to the Irish and American citizens of the United States, inviting them to assist in this righteous cause by similar institutions throughout America.

Resolved, That we will collectively and individually, use our best exertions, to relieve Ireland from those numerous wants and distresses under which she so peculiarly labors, and so far as it lays in our power, endeavor to raise her from her present degraded situation to that station which she of right ought to maintain as a land of native Freedom.

Resolved, That an association of the nature alluded to is best qualified to raise the Irish character here, and that its opinion when sent across the Atlantic is well qualified to cheer those who are now struggling in Ireland for their civil and religious rights, as also to operate upon the minds of the British Governments, to induce them to grant to the inhabitants of Ireland, the blessings resulting from a Catholic emancipation.

Resolved, That in proportion as we value that civil and religious freedom which we exercise here, we deem it our duty to assist in communicating it to the land of our fathers.

Address of the Hibernian Relief Society to the Public.

The friends of Ireland, in Boston and its vicinity, in Massachusetts, consisting of Irish emigrants and American Citizens, assembled for the purpose of devising measures to aid the distressed Irish in their native country, have established **THE HIBERNIAN RELIEF SOCIETY**; and in soliciting a humane and enlightened public to co-operate with them in their charitable undertaking, feel bound to offer a respectful exposition of their views and feelings.

They need not say that, among the numerous portions of the earth where the wickedness of man opposes the intention of nature, and misuses her abundant goodness, **IRELAND** is preeminent in suffering.—With a climate mild, equal and salubrious, a soil not exceeded in fertility, and inhabited by a race at once industrious, persevering, intelligent, docile and humane, she is the abode of misery the most appalling; of degradation the most deplorable. What are the causes of her lamentable prostration? Alas! They are to be found in that too fertile source of moral and physical mischief, the misrule of foreign conquerors. Ireland hath long since lost her independence!—Her neck is bowed to the yoke of the invader! She is in bondage to that power whose fetters never lay light on its victims, and who leaves, wherever its hand is placed, the deep and lasting impress of its gripping fingers. To proclaim in a single sentence, the magnitude and complication of her misery, she is in bondage to that *England*, who, however enlightened, liberal, and humane be a portion of its population, is cursed with a government that has ever felt power and forgotten right, and ever made all within its control the instruments of profligate venality and cold.

selfish, cruel ambition. Ireland is denied the justice which the British Constitution is vauntingly proclaimed, by its admirers, to dispense among all within its jurisdiction. She is denied the charity of that Religion which is based on the foundations of benevolence and peace, and which her selfcreated taskmasters pretend to be professed and practised in its purity, only within the pale of their own church.—The fruits of her labor are wrested from the earner's hand, to sustain British extravagance and minister to British profligacy ; and her blood is poured out as though it were plenteous as water, to fight the battles of British ambition.

How many of her children have perished beneath the barbarous administration of her oppressors ? Almost every spot of earth within her territory conceals in its bosom the remains of some murdered victim to British prerogative, some slaughtered assertor of his country's independence ! And how many, flying from the tempest that sweeps over her in wrath, and marks its course in desolation, seek the common rights of humanity on distant shores ?

And shall we live beneath the sunshine of equal laws ; who enjoy the ineffable blessing of civil and religious liberty, feel no sympathy for suffering so multitudinous ? Shall we, because sheltered from the storm or remote from the scene of its devastation, shut our ears against the cries of its victims ? Shall we merely say *be ye fed*, and leave them to starve ? *Be ye clothed*, and leave them in their nakedness to the "*pitiless pelting*" of the elements ? Let us remember that, to *feed the hungry, clothe the naked, minister to the sick, visit them in prison*, were enjoined among the first of duties by *Him who had not where to lay his head*. From us then, favoured above other nations, a debt of gratitude to "*the Author and the giver of all good things*" is peculiarly due ; and how

can we pay it more acceptably, than by doing good to those on whom the hand of affliction lays heavy ?

To the American Citizen, we trust our appeal will not be vain. To him we would say, " Think of the peace, the security, the abundance you enjoy, and then contrast them with the miseries and privations of the oppressed and persecuted Irishman. How many appeals have been made to your charities in behalf of bleeding and perishing Greece ? How often and how eloquently have you been told that, over the hills whereon Classic Learning shed her light, over the plains where Liberty raised her temples, amid the groves where Plato taught and Sappho sang, the Siroc of barbaric despotism hath passed, and left a mournful desolation ? How often have you been told that the consecrated spots whereon the Apostle proclaimed the glad tidings of pardon to an erring world, are profaned by the march of the infidel and that the holy cross and the sacred volume are trampled in the dust beneath his feet ? And how nobly have your hearts responded to the appeal, and how generously have your hands been opened to proffer relief ! But have you no tears for IRELAND ? *She*, like Greece of old, was once free, enlightened, and happy. *She* had her scholars, her poets, her historians, her warriors in the cause of freedom. And if the records of *her* glory did not escape the barbarians of England, as did those of Greece the barbarians of the North and the East, she has only suffered the deeper affliction, and prefers a louder claim to commiseration. *She* too suffers for conscience sake ! *Her* temples are profaned ; the worship *she* hath been taught and cherishes, is urged by *her* oppressors as an apology for *her* wrongs ! And is *Christian Greece* more deserving of religious immunity than *Christian Ireland* ? Will those who approve a crusade against the Turk, withhold the voice of condemnation from

those, who, though clothed in a christian garb, are equally cruel, equally intolerant, equally relentless ? When men suffer for conscience sake, of what concern is it whether their sufferings be inflicted in the name of the cross or the crescent ? They are equally deserving of *Christian* charity, and equally objects of that Samaritan benevolence which pours oil into the wound, without stopping to inquire into the *faith* of the sufferer.

Among the wrongs of Ireland which speak with peculiar force to the American citizen, is the violation of the most important political privilege which a people can possess ; a privilege which is the bulwark of *American* freedom ; a privilege which the boasted British constitution professes to secure. Let an American citizen, in the full enjoyment of his *right of suffrage*, imagine the excitement that would pervade his own free community, should such right be openly and forcibly invaded !—Yet in wretched Ireland, is such outrage of daily occurrence. The landed property of that misgoverned country, by a system of *English* laws enacted to encourage and protect English monopolies, is accumulated in the hands of an aristocracy, and parcelled out by the owners among an enslaved and persecuted tenantry. Of this tenantry, all who receive a net income of forty shillings, are entitled to vote for the Irish members of the British parliament. As nearly all these great proprietors are devoted to the British government, an American citizen may readily imagine the influence they might be disposed to exercise in elections, and how fruitless would be any attempt of the tenant to vote with impunity against the bidding of his land-lord. Ejection from his tenement, on pretences against whose illegality the despoiled and impoverished sufferer has not the means of contending with a powerful aristocrat, is the inevitable reward

of any attempt to vote independently, according to the dictates of conscience. Through this relation of landlord and tenant, is the right of suffrage in Ireland daily violated, and under circumstances of aggravated oppression that would cause the indignation of the free American to pass the bounds of moderation.

To the Irishman in America, whether participating in her freedom as a naturalized citizen, or enjoying her protection as a resident, we appeal, and we trust not in vain, in behalf of the afflicted land of his nativity. To him we would say, "Remember whence you came, and what brought you hither. Remember that you are an expatriated fugitive, escaped from the shipwreck of your country's independence. Remember the ties that bind you to the land of your birth, and do not sever them in the land of your adoption. Perhaps your heart has been waked to every soft and generous feeling by the seraphic lips of Curran ! Perhaps it has been roused to patriotic indignation by the manly strains of Fitzgerald ! Perhaps your sword has been bathed in the blood of freedoms foes beneath the banner of O'Conner ! Perhaps you have lingered in tearful remembrance over the soil that wraps the sainted remains of Emmet ! Remember how heavily you were visited by the oppressors wrath, and how you were obliged to bow your neck, as the only means of preserving even the life that God had given you ! Remember how you were prohibited from adoring that God according to the forms which your fathers taught and which your conscience approved ; and how, in offering your oblation to His holy name, you were obliged to seek some dark and secret place which the glance of your tyrants had not penetrated ! Remember how the scanty morsel that should have hushed the cries of your starving children, was wrested

from your hand to swell the abundance of some pampered and profligate member of a British hierarchy. Remember how, the victim of tyranny in countless shapes, the very child of despair, you fled from the desolating tempest that swept over your native land, and sought among strangers the peace which that land could not give. Such has been your fate ; and such, at this moment is the fate of thousands—millions of your countrymen. Perhaps you have left a parent, a child, brother, a friend, now languishing beneath the cruelties from which the ocean wave hath borne you ; and who, prevented through penury, from seeking the refuge which you have sought, are doomed to bear yet longer the fetters of foreign task masters, the stripes of religious and political bigots. Remember what you have suffered ; reflect on what you now enjoy ; and think how many of your wretched compatriots you can relieve in their native land, or can assist to fly to a land of freedom.

We appeal then to the humane and compassionate throughout this favoured country, whether American or Irish, to contribute a small portion of their abundance, for establishing a fund to relieve the miserable victims of religious and political oppression in unhappy Ireland. More particularly do we appeal to the Irish in America. A small sum furnished by each, at regular periods, would soon constitute a fund sufficient to relieve the necessities of many, and without diminishing the wordly comforts of the donors. Though it be needless to designate the particular objects of the proposed charity, for unhappy Erin presents them in thousands and ten of thousands, yet those who are driven from their homes by oppressive landlords, for exercising independently the sacred right of suffrage, and those who wish to join their more fortunate countrymen in seeking the security imparted by American freedom, will be espe-

cially considered. The association now established in Boston for furnishing the relief proposed, is but a branch of a similar association for the same objects in Ireland, and which is under the superintendence of her most distinguished children.

Those therefore who cast their mite into this treasury of good works, may rely upon the exalted integrity and holy patriotism of Ireland's brightest luminaries, for a just appropriation of their donations. We therefore, the friends of Ireland, associated for the purpose of relieving, so far as may be, the distressed Irish in their native country, now solicit the co-operation of the humane throughout the United States, and particularly of the Irish in America, in our charitable undertaking.

Preamble.

Whereas it has pleased the All wise Creator of all things so to dispose of created man, that while many are ready to exclaim, " Surely our lines have fallen to us in pleasant places " others are grooping in darkness, deprived of the common necessities of life and the enjoyment of political and religious Freedom ; that while the people of the United States are enjoying Plenty under their free republican institutions, guarranteeing equal rights to all, other sections of the inhabitable Globe are oppressed by famine and a deprivation of those rights which the God of Nature designed for all, when he willed that man should be of his own image and that all should be free and equal ; and whereas in a particular manner, Ireland, the birth place of Genius, Eloquence and Poetry, from whose soil Gems of the purest lustre still ornament the British Crown and every part of the known world, is now, and has been for Centuries past, groaning under unwarrantable exactions both political and religious, in so much that starvation and bloodshed have visited the dwelling of the unoffending Irish ; we the subscribers believing in the efficacy of active benevolence, the first born of that heavenly virtua^t

charity, do hereby agree to associate together under the style and name of the

Hibernian Relief Society,

and that we will be governed by the following Constitution and by laws.



CONSTITUTION

OF THE

HIBERNIAN RELIEF SOCIETY.

ARTICLE I.

The Society shall consist of as great a number of members, of whatever Country born, as are of good moral character and may sign and comply with the Constitution and by laws of said Society.

ARTICLE II.

Any member who shall have performed all the duties of membership for the space of three years shall be enrolled as an honorary member and shall thereupon be entitled to the special regard of the Society.

ARTICLE III.

The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, two Vice Presidents, a recording Secretary, corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and a Board of Trustees consisting of twenty-four members.

ARTICLE IV.

Fifty members shall constitute a Quorum ; and a majority of the members present shall, at all times govern except in cases otherwise provided for.

ARTICLE V.

Any officer or member may be impeached and removed from office or membership, or both, for a violation of the Constitution or by laws, or for other improper conduct, by the vote of two thirds of the members present. Provided no officer or member shall be removed or expelled without having due notice of his accusation under charges and specifications and ample opportunity to make his defence: and to the end that this may be fully secured to him who may be thus accused, the cause of complaint, shall be specifically stated in writing, a copy of which shall be furnished by the Secretary to the accused, thirty days at least before said accusation shall be acted upon by the Society.

ARTICLE VI.

The Funds of the Society shall be subject to appropriation by a vote of the Society only.

ARTICLE VII.

The Society at any time hereafter may make laws not inconsistent with this Constitution; which shall be equally binding; but no law shall be enacted or amended or any alteration be made in this Constitution unless it shall have been proposed at a previous meeting and shall receive the concurrence of two thirds of the members present.

ARTICLE VIII.

The Constitution and by laws of this Society shall be signed by the Government and members thereof.

BY-LAWS
OF THE
HIBERNIAN RELIEF SOCIETY.

LAW I.
Of the President.

SEC. I.

The President shall preside at all the meetings of the Society and shall maintain order therein.

SEC. II.

In case of equal division of the members present upon any question, he shall have his election, in this as in all other cases, to vote or not as he may deem expedient.

SEC. III.

He shall sign all orders on the Treasurer, which shall have been previously sanctioned by a vote of the Society.

SEC. IV.

At the written request of twenty-five members he shall direct the Secretary to convene a special meeting of said Society.

LAW II.
Of 1st Vice President.

SEC. I.

He shall attend all meetings of the Society and shall assist the President in maintaining order therein.

SEC. II.

In case of the absence of the President the 1st Vice President shall preside and maintain order in said Society.

LAW III.

SEC. I.

The 2d. Vice President in the absence of the President and 1st Vice President, shall preside at the meetings of said Society and maintain order therein.

SEC. II.

At all meetings of said Society where the President or 1st Vice President shall be present, the 2d. Vice President shall assist the recording Secretary in entering names of new members and such other business as may facilitate the business of the Society.

LAW IV.

OF THE

Recording Secretary.

SEC. I.

The Recording Secretary shall keep full and fair records of all the doings of said Society.

SEC. II.

He shall attest all orders on the Treasurer, approved by the President, under a vote of the Society.

SEC. III.

He shall keep a Book in which all members shall subscribe their names, free to the inspection of members at all meetings and shall carefully record the amount contributed by each member.

SEC. IV.

He shall notify by written or printed notifications all members appointed on committees, and officers, of their election.

SEC. V.

He shall notify the members of each monthly and special meeting by publishing the same five days at least before said meeting in two or more of the public news papers printed in this city.

LAW V.

OF THE

Corresponding Secretary.

SEC. I.

It shall be the duty of the corresponding Secretary to communicate to all similar Societies in the United States or elsewhere, the doings of this Society and generally to correspond with the Friends of Ireland, throughout the civilized world when ever directed by a vote of this Society or whenever such correspondence may in his opinion be beneficial or expedient.

SEC. II.

He shall keep a book in which shall be recorded, copies of all letters by him addressed or by him received upon matters of interest to this Society.

SEC. III.

In all remittances for the suffering people in Ireland, he shall address a letter accompanying the same expressive of the good will of the friends of Ireland in this country.

LAW VI.*Of the Treasurer.***SEC. I.**

He shall receive all monies paid over to him by the Trustees of said Society, and shall keep a true and accurate account of the same, as also of any other monies contributed by individuals or which may be received by the recording Secretary of said Society.

SEC. II.

He shall answer all orders drawn upon him, by virtue of a vote of said Society, approved by the President and attested by the Secretary.

SEC. III.

He shall give bonds to the satisfaction of the Government and Trustees of said Society for the faithful performance of his duty.

LAW VII.*Of the Trustees.***SEC. I.**

Due regard shall be had in the choice of the twenty our Trustees of said Society, so that they may dwell in different sections of the city of Boston and vicinity.

SEC. II.

Each Trustee shall keep a book in which he shall duly enter the receipt of monthly payments of members and contributions for the benefit of said Society.

SEC. III.

Each Trustee shall pay over to the Treasurer every three months all payments of members and con-

tributions by him received, and shall also once in three months make out and deliver to the recording Secretary a list of the names of all new members and the amount paid by each as also the names and amount paid by each of the old members; so that the same may be recorded in said Secretary's book.

SEC. IV.

Each of said Trustees shall take the said Treasurer's receipt for all monies paid over as aforesaid.

LAW VIII.

Of Members.

SEC. I.

Any person of good moral character upon signing the Constitution and By laws of this Society may become a member thereof.

SEC. II.

Every member shall pay into the hands of one of the Trustees of this Society twelve and a half cents each and every Calender Month so long as he shall continue a member thereof.

SEC. III.

It shall be the duty of every member punctually to attend every monthly and special meeting of said Society and to guard the interest thereof.

SEC. IV.

Each member shall upon signing the Constitution and By laws and paying to the Secretary twelve and a half cents in addition to his monthly subscription, be entitled to a Book containing the resolves, address and the Constitution and By laws of said Society.

SEC. V.

No member shall speak upon any subject before a meeting of the Society more than once, unless it be to explain.

LAW IX.

Of Meetings.

SEC. I.

The Society shall hold regular meetings on the evening of the first monday of every month.

SEC. II.

A member wishing to speak must rise and address the chair ; and all conversations unconnected with the subject before the Society shall be deemed out of order.

SEC. III.

Business regularly before the society shall not be interrupted except by a motion to commit, amend, postpone or adjourn.

SEC. IV.

No motion shall be considered before the Society, unless seconded, and, if required reduced to writing.

SEC. V.

A motion may be withdrawn by the mover previously to any decision being had thereon.

SEC. VI.

In questions of order, the decision or opinion of the President shall be decisive except in cases of appeal ; in case of an appeal from the opinion or decision of the President to the members present, the meeting shall be resolved into a committee of the whole. A chairman shall be appointed, on rising

the meeting shall be reorganized and a report made to the society which shall be conclusive.

SEC. VII.

In case of a quorum not being formed within one hour after the appointed time, those present may adjourn.

SEC. VIII.

No business shall be transacted at a special meeting, but that for which the meeting was called.

LAW X.

Of Elections.

SEC. I.

The Election of all the Officers of this Society shall take place at the monthly meeting holden in March annually.

SEC. II.

All elections in this Society shall be by written ballot—except otherwise ordered by two thirds of the members present.

LAW XI.

Of Committees.

SEC. I.

The appointment of Committees, except where it shall be otherwise ordered by a vote of the Society, shall be vested in the President.

SEC. II.

The first person named on any committee shall be chairman of said committee except when the President shall be a member, in which case the President shall be chairman.

SEC. III.

All committees shall report in writing when required so to do by a vote of the Society.

LAW XII.

Of Expenses.

SEC. I.

As the object of this Society is the relief of the distressed, the expenses of the meetings of the same shall be as economical as is consistent with respectability.

SEC. II.

All expenses for Books, Stationary, room, lights and firing and the necessary expenses of the Society shall be paid out of the Society's funds, upon a statement duly laid before the Society and by a vote thereof, approved by the President and attested by the Secretary.

**OFFICERS.***President.*

ABRAHAM MOORE Esq.

First Vice President.

WILLIAM LITTLE Jr. Esq.

Second Vice President.

JOHN W. WHITMAN Esq.

Recording Secretary.

W. P. GRAGG Esq.

Corresponding Secretary.

RUSSELL JARVIS Esq.

Treasurer.

HENRY B. SMITH Esq.

**TRUSTEES.**

Messrs. E. H. ADAMS.

JAMES WILSON.

JAMES BOYD.

THOMAS MURPHY.

MICHAEL RILEY.

PATRICK BYRNE.

JOHN REDMAN.

JAMES GIBBS.

WALTER MADIGAN.

DENNIS TIMMONEY.

JOHN M'CLURE.

SHERIDAN.

WILLIAM WELCH.

JOHN WATSON.

WILLIAM LANDERS.

MICHAEL RYAN.

JAMES HEDGELAND.

SAMUEL WALKER.

MATTHEW FOLEY.

WALTER WELCH.

JOHN M'GARR.

JOHN SHANNON.

JAMES KELT.

JOHN GRINSELL











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